

**John Day/Snake Resource Advisory Council (RAC)
Meeting Minutes - Pendleton, OR
February 12, 2001**

Facilitator: Earle Rother Recorder: Peggy Diegan

John Day/Snake RAC Members

Federal Officials

Group 1

Terry Drever-Gee, Energy and Minerals - 2002
Adriane P. Borgias, Trans/Rights-of-Ways - 2002
Robert Messinger, Commercial Timber - 2002

Sandy Guches, Acting Designated Fed.
Official
Jeff Blackwood, Umatilla NF
Penny Dunn-Woods
Karyn Wood, Wallowa-Whitman NF
Tina Welch, Prineville BLM

Group 2

Mae Jeanette Henning, Archeological/Historical - 2001
Shirley Muse, Environment - 2001
Berta Youtie, Conservation - 2002
Frank McMurray Jr., Dispersed Recreation - 2003

Group 3

Michael Hayward, Local Elected Official - 2001
John Tanaka, Academia - 2002
Michael Farrow, Indian Tribes - 2001
Timothy Joe Stearns, Public-at-Large - 2002

Absent RAC Members

Group 1

Robert Morse, Livestock Grazing 2003
Linda Fleming, Commercial Recreation - 2003

Group 2

Manford Isley, Wild Horses & Burros - 2003
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Group 3

Jay Carr, State Govt. Employee - 2003

Absent Federal Officials

Bonnie Wood, Malheur NF
Barron Bail, Prineville BLM

Guests: US Senator Gordon H. Smith's Field Representative Richard A. Krikava

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER 11:00 A.M.

Bob Messinger, Chair

AGENDA/OBJECTIVE REVIEW

Earle Rother

Earle reviewed the agenda. Bob Messinger reported that he sent the letter of appreciation to the John Day Subgroup from the RAC.

ROLL CALL, MEMBERSHIPS AND INTRODUCTIONS

Earle Rother

Bob Messinger determined that there is a quorum present.

MINUTES APPROVAL

Earle Rother

John Tanaka moved and Frank MacMurray seconded, that the minutes for the November 2000 meeting be approved

as corrected. The minutes were approved as corrected.

NOXIOUS WEED SUBGROUP

John Tanaka

*see handout--John would like the RAC to sign a support letter to share at the March 12-17 Noxious Weeds Meeting in Coeur d'Alene, ID. The Eastern Oregon Noxious Weed Public Affairs Project would like the RAC to support their public affairs program for Eastern Oregon Noxious Weeds. John Tanaka moved and Tim Stearns seconded that the RAC sign the resolution of support for this educational program. Motion passed. Resolution was signed and will be sent.

Frank MacMurray moved, Berta Youtie seconded that the RAC write a second letter to say that on this day the RAC signed a letter of support for the Eastern Oregon Noxious Weeds Public Affairs Project and send this letter to the Federal Officials to support the Public Affairs Awareness Campaign including but not limited to support of the noxious weeds problems. Frank MacMurray will write the letter to be reviewed and signed by Bob Messinger. The letter will be sent to the FS and BLM to advise the land managers that the RAC supports this Noxious Weed Public Affairs Project to express the hope that the Federal Agencies will act consistently. Motion passed. Karyn Wood will provide some information to Frank for this letter.

ICBEMP Subgroup

Bob Messinger/Jeff Blackwood

ICBEMP has received thousands of protests and the Department of Interior will not complete the Record of Decision (ROD) until the protests have been resolved. FS and BLM have asked their executives in the affected states to take a look to determine if there are options other than signing one ROD for the entire Interior Columbia Basin planning area. There is a team currently working on evaluating the protests. The ICBEMP Subgroup will be in a stand by mode until this is resolved.

Lunch 11.50

BLUE MOUNTAIN DEMO SUBGROUP

John Tanaka/Jeff Blackwood

John met with the Subgroup and they created their charter. The Blue Mountain Demo Subgroup charter has been signed by Jeff Blackwood. Jeff would like to see this group involved in the restoration strategy that includes 20 plus watersheds in the demo area to determine what is high, med, or low priority on when it needs to be done. FS is trying to select high priority projects. The subgroup can help with the annual review of the priorities. Karyn Wood would like to have the subgroup work with FS teams so they can understand the barriers that the FS is faced with. Mike Hayward would like the Federal Officials to run ideas or concepts through the subgroup for feedback. Karyn felt that monitoring might be something that the subgroup could look at and give recommendations.

HELLS CANYON SUBGROUP

Karyn Wood

This group will be meeting in April. Karyn will provide the RAC with a membership list of this committee. Draft comment period closes in June. Group is in the final stages of deciding on the final alternative. Consulting is going on with the Nez Perce. There are cattle grazing in half of the National Recreation Area (NRA). Sheep are not allowed because of the bighorn sheep in the area. Some weeds are propagated by fire. Need to capitalize on the emergency rehab dollars available by putting in native seed to counteract the weeds.

JOHN DAY/SNAKE RAC CHARTER REVIEW

Bob Messinger

Bob would like the RAC members to come to the next meeting with suggestions of changes to the charter.

1608 ACT - COUNTIES PAYMENT ACT

Jeff Blackwood/Earle Rother

No known movement to change the 1600 counties RAC'S requirements to match the current RAC member qualifications. Association of OR counties and O and E counties have got together on how these new RAC'S will be formed. Oregon is getting 56% of the available money. The counties are interested in maintaining the integrity of the pot of money within the counties. The nine counties included in our area are: Malheur, Harney, Baker, Grant, Wallowa, Union, Umatilla, Burns, Morrow and Wheeler may be combined with Deschutes.

Application process is structured very similar to the regular RAC process. Call went out last week asking for nominees to submit their names to the county commissioners. These new RAC committees are supposed to be chartered by April 28, 2001. Every county wants to have their own RAC committee to look out for their interests. Money that is allocated can be spent on BLM land, because it says public land. Association of Counties has already determined how they want to geographically distribute RAC membership committee, based on percentage of what money goes where. Each county is to put together their wants. Commissioners have to decide if they want the full amount or receive the 25%. Most counties are opting for the full payment

JOHN DAY WATERSHED

Tina Welch

Tina's new position is Field Manager with the BLM in Prineville. There are two resource areas in the Prineville District and Tina is the new manager of the resource area responsible for the John Day Plan. Tina is going to Portland this week to meet with the Oregon BLM State Director, Elaine Zielinski and some of her top folks to review the John Day Plan. The Record of Decision is BLM'S responsibility, and will be on the street next month. Land exchanges are a big topic and the Prineville and Vale District has had a large land exchange because Legislation required this to happen by December 2000.

OHV STRATEGY

Adriane Borgias

Some of the RAC comments were incorporated. Bicycles were removed from the plan because there was no regulatory authority to include them. Questions from the committee of where do we go from here. Licensing might be done by the state rather than the feds. Adriane will put together a draft for the response from the RAC. (Make this an agenda item at the next meeting) Jeff - three National Forests are looking at the issues in these areas to see if changes need to be made. The forests currently have voluntary use of purchasing passes. The forests are considering making this mandatory so it will be fairer to all. New passes are good for the whole year anywhere in the FS system. Considering having purchasing on site just like the campgrounds currently have. Users would just pick up an envelope and put their payment in the collection box.

RAC TERMS ENDING 2001

Bob Messinger

Recorder will send out information as soon as it becomes available concerning the application process for the 2001 RAC terms expiring.

NEXT MEETING (S)

Include in the May 8-9 meeting in La Grande, a field trip. RAC wants to have the business meeting on May 8 and the field trip at the Blue Mountain Demo Area on May 9. The August 2-3 meeting location will be decided at the May meeting.

John Tanaka moved and Mae Jeanett Henning seconded that Berta Youtie write a letter to the new Secretary of Interior, Gayle Norton to invite her to the next two RAC meetings that would include a field trip to the Blue Mountain Demo Area. Motion carried

NEWS RELEASE

Earle Rother

Need a news release of the agenda for the next meeting. Suggestion for a release to go out before the next meeting on how to portray the differences between the current Resource Advisory Councils and the new Resource Advisory Committees.

*Request to send out the address of the Vale website to the RAC members that has the John Day/Snake RAC web site on it.

ADJOURN

John Day/Snake Resource Advisory Council Meeting Minutes - Pendleton, OR February 13, 2001

Facilitator: Earle Rother
John Day/Snake RAC Members

Recorder: Peggy Diegan
Federal Officials

Group 1

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Terry Drever-Gee, Energy and Minerals - 2002

Sandy Guches, Acting DFO
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Penny Dunn-Woods, BLM

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Michael Hayward, Local Elected Official - 2001

Guests:

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER - 9:00 A.M.

Terry Drever-Gee

NATIONAL FIRE PLAN

JeffBlackwood

As a result of the bad fire season there is an effort for agencies to come up with a plan to work together to fight fires. Extra dollars were budgeted to reduce fuels to lessen the impact of fires. With the change in the administration the FS still thinks there is support to this program. Funding is being provided for increases in fire fighting staffing to fight fire and prescribed fire. FS and BLM are mainly hiring fire fighters with an opportunity to increase field use. The Blue Mountain Demo Area is looking at projects that can be funded by the fire dollars at this time. It will be difficult to do more prescribed burns because the burning windows are not there all the time. The BLM and FS coordinate with each other to lessen the impact on air quality. Fuel breaks on ridge tops may be done. FS is being cautious in hiring because of

being able to maintain the staffing level so folks do not have to be laid off at a latter date. Hiring is being done at the national level. Oregon FS is not a big player compared to other states. If you want the money next year you have to perform this year. There is a lot of natural response and areas do not need reseeding. Fire causes seeds cones to open and a natural reseeding occurs. As fire cleanup the firefighters rehab the fire lines before they leave the fire.

Sandy Guche's Vale District will be hiring 36 new fire temps and terms positions. Not enough folks are qualified. States have identified communities at risk to wildfires. Numerous timber fire plans have been identified by BLM in the Baker Resource Area, plus Baker has three or four projects that are urban interface projects, that have not had the right window to burn yet. Vale has some plans in cheat grass areas for controlled burns. A lot of projects are on the shelf. Because of the current hiring freeze, there is a concern that these folks will not be hired soon enough to complete the projects this year.

OPEN FORUM

John Tanaka there is a Policy Analysis Center that covers 13 western states with their own governing board. This board has a virtual center headquartered out of Idaho with the main office located in Michigan and a web site for the Policy Analysis Center for Western Public Lands <http://agecon.nmsu.edu/center> at the New Mexico State University. Juniper research is being done to ease the energy crisis. Opportunity is now because of the energy crunch in California to see if it will work.

Tim Stearns thinks the northwest energy crisis creates an opportunity for creative energy, and the RAC might look at implications of what is going on in Walla Walla with 400 windmills and 2 turbo engines. What does the publics want in this area. Are there forest fuels opportunities. Government of Alaska wants to build one or two more pipelines. Natural gas is totally volatile plus nuclear energy has its problems. Junipers are fast growing and hot burning but they grind up machinery. Need to have selective clearing not wholesale clearing.

Mae Jeanette wants a basic weed report from the FS and BLM at the next meeting with plans for the coming season.

Tim Stearns suggest that if the Secretary of the Interior, Gayle Norton accepts our invitation to attend one of our meetings, the RAC needs a briefing book to give to her that includes issues that this RAC is working on, such as OHV, Blue Mountain Demo Project, and Noxious Weeds. Suggestion that instead of a briefing book the information could be put on the RAC web site. This RAC is advising both the FS and BLM. There are three of these joint RAC'S: John Day/Snake RAC, South Eastern Oregon RAC, and Eastern Washington RAC.

The RAC agreed that in the future the public comment period would be moved to the first day of the RAC meeting.

ADJOURN

Mae Jeanett Henning moved and Frank MacMurray seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

S/Penny Dunn-Woods
5/8/2001

5/8/2001

S/Robert Messinger

SANDY GUCHES

Date

ROBERT MESSINGER

Date

Acting Designated Federal Official

Chair